

Integrating AI Agents into Islamic Higher Education: Learning Experiences and Pedagogical Challenges at FDI UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

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Abstract. The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Islamic education presents both opportunities and significant challenges, particularly with the emergence of the *usul.ai* platform as an AI agent for research into classical texts (*turāts*). This study aims to map the technical characteristics and epistemological functions of *usul.ai*, as well as to explore the learning experiences of first-year students (cohort 2025) at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI) at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta in integrating *usul.ai* into their studies. Furthermore, this study identifies fundamental limitations and pedagogical risks associated with the use of AI within the Islamic higher education ecosystem. This research employs a qualitative method with a phenomenological design to understand the participants' direct experiences. Data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with first-year students who had interacted with *usul.ai*, and were subsequently analysed using thematic analysis and data triangulation to ensure the validity of the findings. The research findings indicate that *usul.ai* acts as a catalyst that accelerates classical text literacy and research efficiency amongst students. The platform functions as adaptive scaffolding that bridges language barriers, though it still requires close supervision. Theoretically, this study proposes a hybrid model of 'shuhbatu ustadz' (teacher guidance) and 'shuhbatu AI' (AI support), in which AI is positioned as *Khadim al-'Ilm* (servant of knowledge). Although beneficial, the use of AI carries pedagogical risks in the form of data hallucinations and academic dependence, which may erode critical thinking skills. Therefore, this study recommends that the integration of AI into Islamic education must remain 'human-in-the-loop' to preserve the authenticity of the *sanad* and the values of *tarbiyah*.

Keywords: AI Agent, Islamic Studies Education, AI-Supported Learning, Classical Islamic Learning, *usul.ai*

INTRODUCTION

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into education has advanced rapidly, from basic intelligent tutoring systems to generative large language models, presenting both significant opportunities and challenges within the research and learning paradigm [1], [2], [3]. The use of AI in education offers a range of benefits, such as personalised learning, flexible accessibility, authentic visualisation of learning materials, and instant feedback for both students and teachers. However, the adoption of this technology has also raised serious concerns regarding the erosion of academic ethics, a decline in critical thinking skills due to over-reliance, and the risk of social isolation for learners.

Broader scholarship on AI capability, educational implementation, and historical development provides additional context for both the opportunities and institutional constraints of adoption [4], [5], [6]. Work focused on ethics, critical-thinking risk, and technology-integrated higher education further underscores the need for human oversight [7], [8], [9].

Internally, the weaknesses in the application of AI in education lie in the fact that many intelligent tutoring systems currently in use still employ simple techniques, thereby continuing to require human intervention, as well as the potential for bias in the algorithmic code and training data created by programmers. Meanwhile, the external threats faced include psychological concerns about the loss of roles for educational staff, the potential for damage to teacher-pupil relationships due to excessive standardisation, and a lack of preparedness on the part of schools, which increases the risk of technology misuse, privacy breaches, surveillance, and even the leakage of personal data by commercial organisations [10]. In the context of traditional Islamic studies, the dynamics of this technological disruption are felt to be increasingly urgent with the emergence of cutting-edge platforms such as *usul.ai*.

As an AI agent specifically designed to assist researchers in Islamic studies in understanding the classical Islamic texts and finding answers based on Islamic legal texts, its arrival brings both a breath of fresh air and new challenges for Islamic higher education institutions. Within the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI) at the State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, the incoming cohort of 2025 students faces the integration of this technology amidst the requirement to master classical Arabic literature. Although various studies have examined the ethics and technical aspects of AI in Islamic studies [11], [12], [13], [14], the current literature remains dominated by normative and conceptual analyses. This leaves an empirical gap regarding users' real-world experiences in the field; consequently, research into the implementation of *usul.ai* at the FDI, UIN Jakarta, is crucial for bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The novelty or scientific originality of this research lies in its analytical focus, which examines the direct impact of using the *usul.ai* platform on the academic dynamics of first-year students of the 2025 intake at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI), UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, in their understanding of classical texts (*turots*) and in supporting their studies. Whilst previous literature has been largely limited to testing the technical credibility of AI solely as a tool for the translation of *hadith* at a macro level, this research pioneers a move into the pedagogical realm and the real-world experience (user experience) of students. Specifically, this research explores how an AI agent based on Large Language Models (LLMs) interacts directly with students' ability to analyse classical Arabic literature. This study explores the learning experiences of first-year students at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI), UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, in utilising the *usul.ai* platform to support their academic studies. Equally crucial, this study also aims to identify the fundamental limitations and pedagogical risks associated with the use of *usul.ai* within the ecosystem of classical Islamic higher education.

In line with the research question, this study aims to map the technical characteristics and epistemological functions of *usul.ai* as an authoritative Islamic text-based cyber agent in the modern era. Furthermore, this study seeks to explore in depth the real-life learning experiences of first-year students in the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI) at UIN Jakarta, intake 2025, in integrating *usul.ai* into their academic activities to understand classical Islamic texts. Finally, this study aims to identify the fundamental limitations and pedagogical risks associated with the use of *usul.ai* in order to define critical boundaries and an ideal model of collaboration within Islamic education.

METHODS

Research Design: This study employs a qualitative design to explore in depth the phenomenon of the use of the *usul.ai* platform. This approach focuses on understanding reality and first-hand experiences from the participants' perspective without manipulating variables.

Data Collection: Data was collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The participants involved in these FGDs were first-year students who had interacted with *usul.ai*. The FGDs were conducted to gather information interactively on three main aspects:

Experience: First-year students' interactions with and first impressions of the platform

Challenges: Technical and non-technical obstacles encountered during use.

Opportunities: The potential benefits and development of *usul.ai* in supporting participants' academic activities.

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Qualitative data in the form of FGD transcripts were processed using thematic analysis techniques. The researchers coded the data to identify, analyse and map the main patterns or themes emerging from the discussions. Once the themes had been established, the data were further examined using phenomenological interpretation techniques to extract deeper meanings (*lived experience*) and understand the essence of the participants' awareness of the phenomenon of using *usul.ai*.

Data Validation: To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, this study employed data triangulation. The researcher cross-checked various pieces of information and perspectives emerging from different FGD participants, in order to minimise subjective bias and ensure that the themes identified truly represented the phenomenon under investigation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Artificial Intelligence in Islamic Scholarship: Technical Framework and Functionality of Usul.ai

For more than two decades, the field of digital Islamic studies has been dominated by conventional text-search software. *Maktabah Syamilah* is the most prominent example of this. Developed since 2002 by Dr Hossam Abu al-'Ala, a doctor from Egypt, *Maktabah Syamilah* was originally designed as a private library

(maktabah) before eventually being opened to the public and evolving into a collaborative project involving scholars and developers worldwide, giving rise to various variants such as Alfiyyah, Makkiyyah and Waqfiyyah [15]. Its popularity has made this platform the de facto standard for digital libraries of classical Arabic texts, with a collection of over 5,300 works, making it the authoritative reference in philological and Islamic studies [16]. However, like other Arabic digital libraries, such as Maktabah al-Waqfiyyah, Maktabah Syamilah also has structural limitations. Arabic digital libraries generally lack comprehensive datasets, advanced search functions, or an Application Programming Interface (API) that enables integration with AI tools—a capability that has become standard within the English-language legal tech ecosystem. Searches on such platforms also essentially still rely on lexical matching (keyword matching). Consequently, the accuracy of search results depends heavily on the precision of the terms entered by the user, without the ability to understand the meaning or semantic context of the query.

A paradigm shift is beginning to take place with the emergence of generative AI and large language models (LLMs) built upon the foundations of Natural Language Processing (NLP). This is the branch of artificial intelligence concerned with the computational processing and understanding of human language [17]. Rather than merely displaying the locations where keywords appear, as with Maktabah Syamilah, the new generation of NLP-based Islamic research platforms now enables users to ask questions in natural language and receive contextually synthesised answers drawn from thousands of sources simultaneously, complete with the ability to trace references across centuries almost instantaneously. This transformation presents both opportunities and risks in equal measure. NLP models democratise access to the Islamic scholarly heritage, which was previously only accessible through elite libraries or specific academic institutions [18]. On the other hand, the ease of obtaining ‘authoritative answers’ without going through the process of tracing primary sources or following scholarly chains of transmission raises new concerns, particularly regarding the potential proliferation of religious interpretations not grounded in proper scholarly methodology. Thus, the shift from the era of text search engines to the era of Generative AI and NLP in Islamic studies is not merely a technical transformation; rather, it carries fundamental epistemological and methodological implications for the way Muslims access and validate religious knowledge in the digital age.

From an epistemological perspective, the role of artificial intelligence in contemporary Islamic studies is positioned as *Khadim al-Ilm*, that is, a servant to those of knowledge. This term essentially describes the status of AI as a tool or digital assistant for researchers, rather than as an independent entity possessing theological authority or the capacity for independent *ijtihad* [19]. This clarification is important because it limits the epistemological scope of AI: its computational capacity, however great, does not automatically confer legal legitimacy, as legitimacy in Islamic epistemology derives from human scholarly authority linked to a chain of transmission (*sanad*), not from data-processing power alone.

This is because, in Islamic epistemology, *ijtihad* is held in very high regard amongst the *ulama* (scholars of Islamic law). In the discipline of *usul al-fiqh*, a significant portion of the discussion is devoted to the criteria for a *mufti*. A *mufti*, within the field of *usul al-fiqh*, must meet very strict criteria. The classification established by the *ulama* is of the highest order. This is because a *mufti* in Islam occupies a crucial position, namely that of *istinbath al-ahkam* (deriving legal rulings) for the community. It is therefore clear why the scholars impose such stringent criteria. Al-Ghazali explains that a *mufti* must possess a thorough knowledge of the Qur’an, particularly the verses containing legal rulings (*ayat al-ahkam*) [20]. The weight of these demands becomes even more apparent when referring to the view of al-Thufi, who rejects the restriction of *ayat al-ahkam* to a specific number, as advocated by some scholars who limit it to five hundred verses.

According to al-Thufi, Sharia law is not only derived from verses that explicitly contain commands and prohibitions, but can also be deduced from narratives and verses of moral instruction, so that there is scarcely a single verse in the Qur’an from which the derivation of legal rulings is impossible; the restriction to five hundred verses, in his view, applies only to those verses directly intended to explain the law, not to verses from which legal rulings are derived through ‘*istifadah*’ (indirect inference) [21]. The implication is that the scope of knowledge a *mufti* must master is far broader than merely memorising the explicit legal verses. A view reinforcing the gravity of this position also comes from Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah in *I’lam al-Muwaqqi’in*, who refers to the *mufti* as *al-muwaqqi’* ‘an Rabb al-‘Alamin—the signatory on behalf of Allah—a metaphor emphasising that a *mufti*’s fatwa directly represents the will of the Shari’ah before the community [22]. From these three views, a consensus is evident amongst scholars of *usul al-fiqh* that the position of *mufti* is not merely an administrative post, but rather a scholarly and spiritual trust that demands comprehensive mastery of the sources of Islamic law as well as wisdom in applying them within the context of social reality.

This subordinate status is clearly illustrated in the operational model of AI as an assistant to the *mufti*. Mabrouk emphasises that the role of AI in the process of legal reasoning (*istinbath*) is limited to supporting

research and decision-making, without substantially replacing the authority of the ulama[23]. This argument is reinforced by findings from an evaluation of the El Bayane system, a model that employs Case-Based Reasoning (CBR)—a method of reasoning based on precedents from previous fatwa cases. Although this system is capable of formulating recommended answers based on patterns from previous cases, its capacity is still designed as a reasoning aid for the mufti, not as a substitute for the legal authority's own decision-making[24].

The position of AI as an aid is underpinned by three interrelated epistemological limitations, as outlined in the following studies. The first limitation concerns the absence of theological authority in machines. This explains that, as non-human entities, machines cannot, in principle, possess the legitimacy to establish Sharia law; such authority remains in the hands of humans possessing scholarly competence, or, in fiqh terminology, the 'uli al-amr'[25]. The second limitation relates to legal liability (dhaman) for errors that may arise from AI-based fatwas. Several of the limitations highlighted emphasise that this liability remains with human parties—whether the system developers, the fatwa institutions overseeing them, or the muftis who personally sign off on the final decisions—and not with the AI system itself, given that AI lacks the moral capacity (taklif) to bear legal responsibility[26]. The third limitation emphasises the need for a multi-layered oversight mechanism, underlining that every output generated by AI must undergo a process of verification and validation by a fatwa council or scholars competent in their respective fields—an approach known in the technological literature as 'human-in-the-loop' [27].

These three limitations are crucial in light of academic concerns regarding the phenomenon known as 'AI worship'—that is, the tendency to treat AI not merely as a tool, but as a source of instant solutions that is regarded as equal to, or even superior to, human scholarly authority. According to Pohan and Nasution, such a shift not only risks undermining academic integrity but is also theologically at odds with the principle of tawhid, as it implicitly positions AI as an entity that replaces the functions of human intellectual and spiritual reflection, which should form the core of the Islamic scholarly process[28].

Pedagogical Opportunities: Enhancing Islamic Higher Education and Textual Engagement

Based on the results of the focus group discussion (FGD) and data triangulation with relevant academic literature, the use of *usul.ai* amongst first-year students at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI) has had a significant impact on the learning ecosystem for Islamic studies. This qualitative analysis was confirmed through the integration of primary data from the FGDs and validated using findings from previous research. New students in the field of Islamic studies, particularly those without a strong background in Madrasah Aliyah (MA) or Islamic boarding schools, often face significant language barriers when engaging with classical Islamic texts (*kitab turāth*) or unvocalised texts (*kitab gundul*). These barriers include limited vocabulary and a lack of understanding of the rules of classical Arabic grammar (*nahwu* and *shorof*), which are key prerequisites in the FDI programme.

The results of the FGD indicate that the automatic translation and text simplification features in *usul.ai* serve as tools that accelerate students' textual literacy. The Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology embedded within the platform is capable of breaking down complex classical sentences into structures that are easier to understand without losing the essence of their meaning. Scientific validation of this phenomenon was demonstrated by Mohammad Roshimi Abdullah, Noor Husna Talib, Shohibuddin Laming, Roshimah Shamsudin, Mohd Abalkhair Mat Ali, and Rojja Pebrian, who found that *usul.ai* makes a very rapid positive contribution to the development of vocabulary, grammatical accuracy, and contextual understanding of complex religious texts. The platform's ability to provide translations that closely match the primary reference text acts as adaptive scaffolding, bridging the language limitations of non-native and beginner-level students [29]. Furthermore, this convenience helps to transform the Arabic language teaching and learning process into a more personalised and efficient one [30]. Nevertheless, direct interaction with lecturers remains the primary channel to ensure that this ease of literacy does not erode students' ability to distinguish between texts independently.

Furthermore, when preparing academic assignments on Islamic studies, first-year students often spend a great deal of time simply cross-referencing doctrines across different schools of thought or tracking down primary texts amongst thousands of volumes of classical works. The implementation of *usul.ai* as a Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG)-based research tool provides substantial cognitive support in the form of efficient cross-school reference tracking. During the focus group discussion (FGD), students confirmed that they could gain instant access to primary texts from trusted databases such as Al-Maktaba Al-Shamela and OpenITI, which are integrated into the system. This has radically broadened their theological and legal reference horizons in a short space of time.

These advantages in terms of time efficiency, expanded access to references, and improved initial conceptual understanding are consistent with the research by Mainuddin, Hermansyah, Muhammad Irfan, Junaidin, and Muh. Zulkifli [27], which notes that the integration of artificial intelligence is capable of

providing practical academic support and enriching the learning process. However, this instant search presents its own critical issues [31]. Mainuddin et al. [27] also warn of the danger of a profound deficit in contextual knowledge if students oversimplify sacred texts or develop an academic dependence that undermines critical thinking. Therefore, validating the accuracy of references remains essential, given that Large Language Models (LLMs) still have gaps in attribution or citation accuracy [14]. The use of *usul.ai* here is positioned purely as a research assistant (tooling) that accelerates data mapping, whilst the authority for interpretation and legal validation remains under human control [12].

In the ‘Fostering Personalised Autonomous Learning’ dimension, the qualitative analysis of the focus group discussions revealed the role of *usul.ai* as an adaptive intelligent tutoring system operating outside conventional lecture hours. Each new student has a different learning pace, particularly when faced with course material in the fields of Sharia, Ushuluddin, and Lughah, which are rich in texts requiring memorisation and deductive reasoning [32]. Through *usul.ai*, students can ask in-depth questions, test their understanding, and revise material independently outside the classroom, unbound by the constraints of lecture time and space. This fosters a strong culture of learner autonomy within the Islamic university environment. According to Iin Indra Nuraeni et al., performance expectancy and effort expectancy from user-friendly generative AI platforms directly drive the intensity of this technology’s utilisation to support students’ independent learning productivity [33]. This personalised learning is also recognised as capable of expanding accessibility and interactivity in the transfer of knowledge [34].

However, to ensure that this self-directed learning model does not devolve into a ‘worship of technology’ or ‘AI worship’ that erodes Islamic spiritual values (Tarbiyah), Islamic higher education institutions emphasise the importance of integrating the values of adab and moral responsibility [35], [36]. FDI students are guided to treat *usul.ai* as a complementary learning medium to support their academic endeavours, without eliminating classical learning traditions such as *talaqqi* and *mulāzamah*, which safeguard the valid transmission of knowledge based on *sanad* [37].

Limitations and Pedagogical Risks: The Imperative of Human-in-the-Loop

The integration of *turāts* literature into artificial intelligence-based digital platforms, such as *usul.ai*, presents both opportunities and epistemological risks. Unlike printed *turāts* texts, which feature variations in manuscripts and commentaries due to editorial differences, AI platforms can produce errors in data synthesis that do not originate from the original manuscripts. This phenomenon of the system independently producing inconsistent or fabricated information is known as AI hallucination.

AI hallucination refers to the phenomenon where large language models (LLMs) produce output that sounds linguistically coherent, convincing and authoritative, yet is not actually grounded in facts or valid sources. A study on LLMs based on Islamic knowledge explains that general language models inherit weaknesses from their training process; namely, the models can reproduce erroneous beliefs, generate baseless claims, fabricate references, and remain confident even when their answers are not rooted in valid evidence[38]. This differs from mere ‘errors’, as hallucinations masquerade as authoritative answers—a characteristic that renders them particularly dangerous when applied to domains demanding high precision, such as religious texts.

In the context of classical Islamic texts and Islamic law, hallucinations take on a specific form and pose a high risk. Studies on the application of AI in Islamic legal methodology note that whilst AI offers efficiency in processing religious texts, analysing legal arguments, and comparing views across different schools of thought, its use still poses risks of hallucination, inconsistency, and, no less importantly, a failure to capture the ‘*illah* (legal rationale), *maqasid al-shari’ah* (the objectives of Shari’ah), and *fiqh al-waqi’* (understanding of contextual reality)[39]. In other words, ‘hallucinations’ in this domain do not merely mean that AI ‘misquotes’, but also encompass its inability to grasp the nuances of legal reasoning that lie at the heart of the *usul al-fiqh* methodology itself. Several other studies even emphasise that traditional religious authorities require a mastery of both the text and the social context—something machines lack—so that the safest role for AI is as an aid to *muftis*, rather than as an independent issuer of *fatwas*.

The findings from the FGD on *Usul.ai* provide empirical evidence consistent with the theoretical framework outlined above. Fathan’s note regarding the need to question trust in AI outputs rather than the validity of the original text directly highlights the need for caution regarding *Usul.ai*’s hallucinations. Participants intuitively realised that answers from the AI that appear convincing do not necessarily have a valid chain of transmission or references in the original text. Similarly, there is a tendency for the AI to provide fabricated answers lacking a valid basis in the source texts. This is also influenced by the prompts given to *Usul.ai*; when prompts are insufficiently specific, and given the unavailability of some texts in the database, it indicates that the system is not yet capable of consistently distinguishing between answers that are genuinely text-based and those that are merely linguistically ‘plausible’. This underlies the participants’ fundamental objection that *Usul.ai* poses a risk to beginners—namely, users who lack the ability to cross-

validate AI answers against the original texts. It is precisely this ability that new students, particularly within the FDI community and more generally amongst the wider public, do not yet possess, leading to a significantly greater risk of becoming trapped in erroneous textual interpretations due to hallucinations.

Apart from hallucinations, the use of AI as a reference when answering questions or studying Islam also carries another risk, namely academic dependency. Academic dependency is defined as a condition in which students or educators uncritically accept texts provided by *usul.ai*, thereby replacing the active cognitive engagement involved in reasoning, verifying and constructing understanding independently—as part of the ‘*tabayyun*’ attitude that users should possess—with passive acceptance of machine output[19]. A synthesis of empirical evidence from 2023–2025 on the use of generative AI in academic reading and writing reveals a genuine tension between the benefits of AI and the risks of student dependency, a decline in metacognitive engagement, and ethical dilemmas regarding plagiarism and authorship. This dependence is not merely a matter of frequency of use, but rather a matter of how such use shifts the locus of epistemic control from students to machines, whereby AI users—whether members of the public or students—become passive consumers of information.

Quantitative data from various studies provide concrete evidence to support these concerns. A qualitative study of educators at Palestinian higher education institutions found that 89 per cent of participants (41 out of 46) reported skills atrophy—including a decline in critical thinking, academic writing and decision-making abilities—as a consequence of over-reliance on AI. The same study also noted pedagogical atrophy among 76 per cent of participants and ethical risks related to plagiarism among 52 per cent of participants[26]. At the student level, research in the context of vocational education found that students tend to become accustomed to seeking instant answers rather than engaging in more in-depth analytical processes, a pattern that indicates a significant negative impact on the development of critical thinking skills[40]. A systematic review of academic integrity in higher education further confirms that reliance on generative AI risks fostering ‘academic laziness’ whilst hindering the development of essential cognitive skills [39].

In the context of the FGD on *Usul.ai*, this pattern of dependency manifests itself in a more subtle yet still recognisable form. The need for students to formulate highly specific prompts in order to obtain clear and valid answers actually reveals a paradox: whilst this tool requires a sufficiently mature grasp of the subject matter to be used effectively, it is precisely this kind of mastery that risks being eroded if students continually rely on AI without engaging in independent reasoning. The assertion by FGD participants (P1, P2) that *Usul.ai* is ‘inadequate’ for in-depth research, as well as the collective realisation that this tool is only beneficial to students who already possess a strong academic foundation, essentially constitute a form of epistemic vigilance against academic dependence itself—that is, a reflective attitude which, ironically, serves as a strong argument for why teacher guidance (*talaqi*) and the hybrid model of ‘*shuhbatu ustadz*’ evolving into ‘*shuhbatu AI*’ must still be maintained as an irreplaceable ‘human-in-the-loop’ framework.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to explore the role and impact of the *usul.ai* platform on the academic dynamics of first-year students in the 2025 intake at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI) at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The main focus of this study is to analyse how the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology based on authoritative Islamic texts influences the process of understanding classical Islamic texts and students’ patterns of independent learning. Based on a thematic analysis, it was found that *usul.ai* functions as a crucial catalyst that accelerates textual literacy and research efficiency, whilst simultaneously triggering a ‘double-learning’ process in which students actively cross-verify AI outputs against the original texts.

These research findings underscore the urgency of adopting a hybrid model that integrates ‘*shuhbatu ustadz*’ (teacher guidance) with ‘*shuhbatu AI*’ (the use of AI). Theoretically, this model positions AI as *Khadim al-‘Ilm* (servant of knowledge), expanding students’ cognitive reach without eroding the epistemological authority of the scholarly chain of transmission. In practical terms, the implication for Islamic higher education is a transformation of the lecturer’s role from merely a source of information to a critical facilitator who guides students in navigating the complexities of technology. This harmonisation ensures that digital progress remains grounded in the values of *tarbiyah*, so that technology acts as an instrument of reinforcement, not a substitute, within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Although it provides new insights, this study has several limitations that should be noted. The scope of the participants was limited to a single cohort at the Faculty of Islamic Studies (FDI) at UIN Jakarta; therefore, generalising the findings to a wider student population or other academic disciplines requires further testing. Furthermore, the use of qualitative methods via focus group discussions (FGDs) may introduce subjective bias on the part of the participants. This study has also not experimentally measured

the long-term impact of AI use on students' academic retention and critical thinking skills in a longitudinal manner.

Based on these findings, Islamic higher education institutions are recommended to immediately formulate ethical guidelines for the use of AI that safeguard the originality of thought and the validity of references. Operationally, the curriculum needs to be enriched with digital literacy training, covering prompt engineering and automated text verification techniques. For future research, it is recommended to use quantitative designs or longitudinal studies to measure the objective impact of AI on academic achievement, whilst involving participants with more varied educational backgrounds to enrich sociological and pedagogical perspectives. Ultimately, this study affirms that the future of digital Islamic scholarship lies in a wise synergy between algorithmic sophistication and the depth of human spirituality, to ensure that the legacy of the *turots* remains relevant and its authenticity is preserved in the era of artificial intelligence.

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